

Disciple

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[0 : 0 0] Again, welcome. My name's Chris. If you don't know me, I'm a teaching pastor here at Watermark. And we're going to be starting a new series today. If you've got, has everyone picked up one of these little things? This is going to be helping us to think about, you can stick this in your bathroom, you can stick this anywhere in your home. This is going to be a reminder for you of some of the things we're going to be talking about as this series. And just to help that, just to really inform and shape the way that we view ourselves. When I was a kid, I went to church quite a lot. And the people at my church, they were nice, okay? They were kind of nice people, nice church people. And every Sunday I'd meet them and then I'd say hi to them. And they would come and say hi back. And we'd all be very pleasant. And then afterwards, they'd go away, go off to their life. I'd go off to my life. And then next Sunday would happen and we'd say hi to each other.

And we'd be very pleasant to each other. And everyone seemed sorted. Everyone seemed kind of nice. And then right into our middle class, kind of nice middle class church, came a few different people who didn't quite fit in. There was an ex-football hooligan. There was some ex-drug addicts.

There was a gym owner who was kind of pretty rough. And everyone in their nice kind of middle class way avoided them. Or just kind of had very polite conversation and then tried very quickly to kind of move off to the people they were comfortable with. But there was one thing that was different.

My parents didn't do that. My parents, they actually invited them to come over to our house for Sunday lunch. Every Sunday, we would have random people come into our home just for lunch. Sometimes my dad would do a Bible study with them. We had all these kind of interesting characters coming in and out of my home.

And people asked me, are your parents pastors? Because, you know, pastors do that kind of thing. And I'd say, no. My parents just teach us ordinary people. And I stopped to think about why people would think that only pastors would do that kind of thing. And I realized that for many of us, the idea of Christianity, of what we read in the Bible, of a radical discipleship, which changes the way we focus on our priorities in life, which for many of us seems very scary, is actually when you read the Bible, this is what life is all about. And our modern Christianity often does not mirror what Jesus calls us to. You know, we've reduced discipleship to an eight-week course that you do. Christianity becomes very manageable. You know, sacrifice means giving up chocolate at Lent. Okay? And what I notice in my own life, and I think in the life of the church, is that even for us, we've been through a period of transition. And when you go through a period of transition, like rocking on a boat, what happens? You want to hold on to the rails of comfort and security and stability in your life. We want to stay with the people we know. We want to be comfortable with the things that we feel okay with. We want to stay safe without taking gospel risks.

[3 : 35] And yet, Jesus is going to say to us, this year in our lives, I don't want you to stay safe. I want you to come and follow me. I want to stretch you in ways that you could never have imagined that are going to be stretched, so that your faith will grow in ways that you could never imagine your faith could grow. And so this year, what we want to do is, we want to root ourselves in the truth, biblical, theological truth, to get us deep down in the roots. You know, like we talked about the vine last week, to really understand, get the sap of God's word flowing into us, so that we can be people who learn how to bear fruit as we're trying to follow along with Christ and make disciples of other people. That's why, who was there at the CG together on Friday? Yeah, it was great. If you weren't there, you need to come this Friday. We had just an amazing time. There was amazing food. There was, and we just said it was a great time, because what we're trying to do with the CG together, we've pulled the community groups for five weeks intentionally, because we see this as a crucial time for us to really get back at the heart of what it means to be disciples of Jesus, and also, how do we help others to become disciples of Jesus? So we want to be shaping our community life. That's why we want you to be there on Friday nights for the next few weeks, because this is a time where we want to shape the way we're living as a church, and really learning how to do what God calls us to do. Does that make sense?

Father, your word is powerful. I pray that your word would speak to us. I pray that we wouldn't just be people who hear your word, but people who do your word. I pray that you would show us Jesus, and let us live in the light of how beautiful you are, and learn to follow you with where you're going. In Jesus' name, amen. Okay, so if you have your passage open with you, the series we're going to look at, if you, do you know those new scanners at airports, you know, where you have to put all your hand on them? You know, you've got to put all your fingers on the scanner just to verify your ID. Well, what we're looking at over the next five weeks is five different biblical titles which show what our identity is as Christians to show us and help us to see what it means to follow Jesus in our lives. And you need all of them to understand what your ID is. And so that's why we have this, to kind of remind you of some of those things. So we're going to look today at disciple. Then we're going to look at saint, family, servant, ambassador, and because I'm perverse, I'm going to add another one as well, which is member. Okay, but we're going to go for the five key ones to start with. So today we're looking at disciple. Okay, disciple. It's a strange word. We don't use it very often, but my definition of a disciple is this. Someone who is growing in trusting Jesus as Savior and growing in lovingly obeying him as Lord in every part of life.

Okay? Growing in trusting him as your Savior and growing in lovingly obeying him as your Lord. Okay? In every aspect of your life. And what I want to do today is just kind of unpack that a little bit and looking at the passages that we have. And I just wanted to say, just to point out, that word growing. Because being a disciple is about a journey. It's not a destination.

It's a journey which starts with a call, which has then a cost, and it takes place on a mission. So we're going to look at the call, the cost, the fuel for responding, and then the mission that he calls us on. Okay? So Mark chapter one. You see the scene. Jesus, before this has come. He's announced that the kingdom of God has arrived. He's called everybody to repent and believe. And it seems like we're on the crest of something amazing about to happen. Maybe there's miracles. Maybe there's healings. Maybe incredible things are going to happen. And then Jesus goes down by the lake of Galilee Galilee and calls some fishermen to follow him. And it seems a bit like an anticlimax if you actually read through Mark. Because Mark is telling us, though, that if you want to see what God's kingdom looks like, it starts in the call of Jesus to ordinary people like you and me. You see, he comes up and he sees Andrew and Simon. And they're in the middle of fishing. Okay? They were fishermen. Now, I don't know if you know about fishing in the first century, but being a fisherman in the first century was a good job. Okay? Because basically, fish was in massive demand in the Roman Empire. It was the food of choice. Okay? If you have rice here, it was fish there. And so the fishing business was a great business to be in.

Okay? And we know from Luke chapter 5 that James and John were also business partners with Simon and Andrew together. And so they're running their own little SME. It's a little family business. Okay?

[9 : 17] Together. And they've got hired servants. They've got employees. Okay? So this business seems to be doing pretty well. And scholars even think that after Jesus' resurrection, you see Peter, who Simon, who's later called Peter, goes fishing again. Okay? Do you know that story after his resurrection? And so they think that actually he still is running his fishing business even while he's going out discipling as a disciple of Jesus because he still has his own boat and things are still going on. So you see Simon, they've got his fishing business. But then you also see he's got his own house. That's in verse 29. It's not in your bulletin. And his mother-in-law was staying with him. Okay? Just imagine what that was like. And so Peter's married. James and John, later on we find out they have an embarrassing tiger mom who comes up to Jesus and says, can you make my sons sit at your right hand and left hand? And they're going, no. Why do you have to say that, mom? That's the kind of families they were. These people, if you look at them, they're just ordinary people like you and me who have got families, they've got homes, they've got jobs, they've got careers, they're just trying to get on in life. Ordinary people. Not super Christians. Not super people. But in their ordinary world, Jesus comes and he calls them. And he calls them. And he says, follow me.

Follow me. Now, you've got to understand the significance of what he is saying when he says, follow me. Because in Jewish culture, basically the way that education worked was like this.

Until you were about 13, young Jewish boys would go to a local synagogue, the school there, and they would learn what's called the Torah, which is the first five books of the Bible. In fact, they wouldn't just learn them. They'd memorize them. Okay? So you look at your Bible, look at the first five books, they had them down, memorized by the age of 10 to 13. After that, what would happen was that most kids would then just go off to be an apprentice in their family's business. That's probably what happened to Andrew and Simon and James and John. But then the brightest kids, okay, would then go on to further study, learning the rabbis' traditions and things like that. And then after 17, and by the way, they would have memorized the whole of the Old Testament by then. Okay? You get a little picture.

This is more than Hong Kong education going on here. Okay? And then by the age of about 17, most people would go off to work, get married, do all the normal things. But then the most elite, brightest of the bright students would go and look for a rabbi, a teacher, who would then go and be able to train them to become the kind of people who really knew and lived out the Word of God.

And what would happen is they would go and ask the rabbi, can I be your disciple? And the rabbi would basically give them the equivalent of like an interview. Like he would grill them on all the kinds, it's like an entrance exam to get into Harvard or Cambridge. He would just grill them with all these kind of questions to see whether they're suitable or not to be his disciple.

[12 : 48] And if he thought they were bright enough, what he would do, he would then say to them at the end of it, follow me. Follow me. And what that meant was, come with me as my disciple and submit to the authority of my teaching in your life and let it shape every part of your life. Because the rabbi was this ultimate example of someone who'd saturated his life so much with the scripture and was following God that the disciples wanted to learn not just stuff about the Bible, they wanted to see how he lived it out in his life. And they would then imitate him. So the really interesting thing is, they were so devoted to their rabbi that they would copy everything he did. So if he walked with a limp, you could tell who his disciples were because they'd start walking with a limp. If you like baseball, they'd like baseball. In fact, we even see stories of a disciple hiding in a rabbi's bedroom to see how he made love to his wife so he could learn later on. Okay? This was serious. You know, this isn't a five-week course in, okay, come and be a disciple. This was a whole life commitment. Because their rabbi was their master, was their lord. And if the rabbi's father, sorry, if the disciple's father needed help at the same time as the rabbi, do you know who he would prioritize?

The rabbi would come first. That's the level of commitment. He's saying, it's a totally new set of priorities you have when you follow me.

And what Jesus does here is absolutely revolutionary, though. Because he doesn't wait for his disciples to be good enough, to kind of pass the test. You see, what he does, out of pure grace, he comes out to them.

Do you see that? He initiates the call to them right where they are. And he says, follow me. And when he's doing that, he's giving them the highest privilege available to them without any entrance requirements except come and trust me and obey me.

That's what he's saying. You know, it's the ultimate apprenticeship. When I was young, one of my guitar heroes, and I've said this before, was a guy called Van Halen.

[15 : 19] Who here knows who Van Halen is? Okay, there's some educated people. Obviously, the rest of you, it just shows the lack of education that there is here. So go home after this, and go on YouTube Van Halen.

You'll see somebody who knows how to play the guitar. Okay? But when I was learning guitar, what I would do, I would go down and I'd get these books which had tabulated all the music in them.

And as I was learning, there'd be these songs, songs which I didn't know. And some of them would buy this guy called Van Halen. And you know, I'd try and kind of work out what some of the notes were and things like that.

But I didn't know what it sounded like until one day, I got a VHS videotape. There was no internet in those days.

Of Van Halen playing. And my goodness, I was stunned. It was like, this was guitar playing as I had never heard it before.

[16 : 20] And I was going, I want to know how to play like that. And you see, I had got the book there which showed the notes, but I couldn't fully understand how to play like him until I actually saw him playing.

Until I actually saw him and saw how he operated. And then I was like, I want to study this guy. I want to know how to do it like he does it. I want to play like that.

That's actually the call of a disciple is actually to say, I want to learn Jesus. I want to, because he lives life like nobody else lives life. He's compassionate and yet bold.

He's strong and yet humble. He's everything you want to be. And so he says, I want to learn Jesus. Come and follow me and learn me with every fiber of your being.

Learn to play life like I play life. And the thing is, if Van Halen personally came into the room and said, follow me, man, I'd be there.

[17 : 27] But he hasn't done that. And I don't think he's ever going to do that. But the amazing grace of the call of Jesus is that he has called each one of you personally to come and be his disciple.

And the thing is, that is grace. You didn't deserve it, didn't earn it, that's grace. But when we dumb down Christianity to say, just pray a prayer, believe that Jesus died to forgive you for your sins, go to church every Sunday, be a good person, pray occasionally to kind of get some help, and then you'll go to heaven, we're not talking about biblical Christianity there.

That is not the call of to be a Christian. Because if Jesus is actually the creator of the universe, the savior of all, as the Bible claims, just think about it.

The nearest star is about 4.26 light years away to us, other than the sun, it's the nearest one. And to get to that star with the shuttle Voyager 1 traveling at 36,000 kilometers an hour, it would take us over 70,000 years to get there.

Okay? How long am I going to live? Well, 70, 80, 90 years maybe. And if you think that that star is only just a speck in the whole of the universe, and if Jesus is really creator of all of that, are we seriously suggesting that we invite him into our lives just to be our personal assistant to kind of help us out in trouble?

[19 : 08] When Jesus calls, it's his incredible grace. But when he calls, his call is for you to center your entire life around him. It's like how you parent, how you approach your work, your family, your relationships.

It's a totally new priority in every area of your life. That's the call of a disciple. And you see Simon, Andrew, James, John, they leave immediately to follow him.

They see the privilege. That's the call. What about the cost? What about the cost? I discovered last week in talking to a guy who's an ex-headhunter that good headhunters, when looking for someone for a post, they approach somebody, they invite them to come and have the job, and then they pull the offer away and say, hmm, I'm not sure you're the right person for this job.

And if the person says, no, no, no, no, no, I really want this job, they know that that is the right person to come and have the job. They know they really want it. And now Jesus does a little bit of the same kind of thing because he says, in Luke 9, he says, if anyone wishes to come after me, let them deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow me.

Whoever wishes to save his life will lose it. Whoever loses their life for my sake will save it. But what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but loses or forfeits himself?

[20 : 39] You see, what he's saying is, if you want to follow me, you've got to count the cost. Because where do you follow Jesus to? Where's Jesus going? The whole of Luke, the Bible story, is actually Jesus is heading to the cross.

And what does the cross represent? The cross represents everything in our culture that we want to avoid, which is death. And so what he's saying is, if you want to find yourself, you don't find yourself by eat, pray, love.

Okay? You find it in dying to yourself. Now that's not a very popular message. The guy, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, who was a guy in the Second World War, he had a safe career in the U.S., but he chose to go back to his home in Germany to help people there because of this call.

And he said this, when Christ calls a man or a woman, he bids him come and die. If grace cost God the life of his son, what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us.

Wow. You know, Luke tells us that this cost, this dying, is not a suicide mission. This is a daily death.

[22 : 03] Every single day, the disciple is learning how to die to himself and how to walk with Jesus. You see, when you seek to save your life, we're trying to gain everything for ourselves.

We're trying to make ourselves as the first priority. And he's saying, denying yourselves is denying you as the number one and saying, Jesus, you're going to be number one. You know, it's not dying to fun.

Some people, you know, they take this and it's like, okay, we never have fun. You know, Jesus is accused of being a party animal. You know that? He turns water into wine. Okay? He knows how to have a good time.

It's not that. No, you're dying to be on the throne of your life. You're dying to find your identity in anything other than Jesus. Do you see what the, Andrew and Simon, they leave behind their nets.

There's fish there. There's money to be made there. And they're saying, my world is not going to be centered. My identity is not going to be centered around just getting stuff for me.

[23 : 04] James and John, they leave their father, their family. And yet, it's not that everyone has to leave their jobs to be a disciple. The call is different for every person, but the call in one sense is the same, which is, find your identity in me and make me number one with whatever context I've placed you in.

Because you see, Simon seems to keep his fishing business going, but there's a radical shift in his priorities and where his comfort is found and his hope is found and his security is found.

You know, when you come home in the evening and all you want to do is put your feet up and watch TV, but your spouse needs the dishes to be washed, what does it mean to die to yourself?

When, like, for me, I was just very convicted by this, just this week thinking about this passage. Procrastination. Anyone good at procrastinating? There's a few.

I am. You know what I procrastinate and I procrastinate on administrative things. Okay? If there's a list of ten things I've got to do and there's stuff to do with like banks or internet companies, all that kind of stuff, that's going down right at number ten on my priority list.

[24 : 21] And yet, it affects others when I don't do those things on time. God says to me, if you want to take up your cross daily, one of the things you need to do is start putting those administrative tasks higher up your list out of love because your procrastination is simply self-seeking, comfort-seeking, you being on the throne of your life.

And a disciple is willing to die to their comfort for Christ's sake and for others' sake. C.S. Lewis said, keep back nothing.

Nothing in you that has not died will ever be raised from the dead. Look for yourself and you will find in the long run only hatred, loneliness, despair, rage, ruin, and decay.

But look for Christ and you'll find him. And with him, everything else thrown in. And he's saying, die to yourself, you'll find yourself because you'll find the true life in me.

There are three people Jesus meets on the road. It's really interesting if you actually look at how discipleship works. Go through the Gospels and you see how Jesus does it. It's really interesting. Three people.

[25 : 37] And one person says, hey, I'm going to follow you wherever you go. And Jesus says to him, foxes have holes, birds of the air have nests, son of man has nowhere to lay his head. And he's saying, okay, are you sure?

I'm not the kind of savior who's just the kind of political campaign manager here. Let me bring this down to your level, he's saying. Okay, you have a home, you've got a nice standard of living.

Are you willing to lay that down for me? Or are you just going to put that before me? That's what he's saying. Are you willing for people to not invite you in because they know that you follow me?

That's what he's saying to this guy. He calls another guy, he says, follow me. But his reaction is different. He says, let me first bury my father. Which makes you wonder why he wasn't burying him beforehand, but anyway.

And another, he says, let me first say farewell to those who are at home. And notice that in each of the occasions he says, let me first. You see that? Because he's saying, listen guys, I know that our culture tells us family comes first.

[26 : 47] But when I call you, I come first. That's hard. But that's what he's saying. And some of us know the opposition from family when you've chosen to trust in Christ and the toughness and the cost of that.

But you only sacrifice, you're only willing to pay that cost for something that is truly precious to you. If Christ is precious to you, you'll pay that cost.

You know, some of us, when we were single, didn't even know that 5am existed. And then you got married and had kids. Right?

And, you know, I was speaking to someone last week and they said, hey, I'm just exhausted from bringing out my kids and everything. But my kids bring me so much joy. I wouldn't trade it in for the world.

And you're looking at them and thinking, really? But because they're not sacrificing everything in their life just to kind of cut themselves off. No, it's because they love their kids.

[27 : 53] And they want their relationship with them. That's what drives them. You know, if you prioritize the wrong things in life, even if you prioritize your kids above Jesus, when things go wrong, you'll be stressing and you'll transfer that stress onto your kids.

And the greatest way to disciple your kids is for you to be learning how to be a disciple of Jesus. But what denying yourself means is this. My focus is not on the denial.

My focus is on the one that I'm following. So it's focused with your kids. It's on your kids, not the cost. And when we focus and follow Jesus, we're not just focusing on, oh, look at all the costs I've got to pay.

No, we're focusing on Christ. And every day you're going to have choices whether you choose to die or live for him. Whether you choose for self or you live for him every day and he says, follow me.

Count the cost. I've called you and I'm going to change you to be who I've called you to be. So that's it. The call, the cost. First, thirdly, the fuel. Being a disciple is not an option.

[29 : 02] Did you get that? If you're a Christian, there's not this two-tier kind of, here's the really keen Christians and here's just the ordinary Christians. He says, no, no, no, everyone is called to be a disciple.

There's no kind of get out clause. But here's the thing. You never earn God's love by being a committed disciple. people. Jesus doesn't say, follow me and then I'll die for you.

He says, I'm going to the cross now for you, now follow me. And do you know, here's the interesting thing. When you're really committed, when you commit to a cause, what often happens, if you're really hardcore, you become hard on yourself and you become hard on the people around you.

Okay? Think of how terrorism works. people who are fanatical for something become very harsh towards other people. The story, which is not in your bulletin, but just before him meeting those three guys, James and John, who had left everything to follow Jesus, they enter with Jesus into a Samaritan village.

And the Samaritan village rejects them, tells them to get out. And Jesus has no place to lay his head as he told the others. And it's interesting, James and John, recalling an Old Testament example of Elijah, they say, basically, let's call down fire on that village in judgment.

[30 : 29] They're hard, because they're committed and these guys are just wasters. Do you know what Jesus does? He rebukes them and says, that's not the way we roll around here. He says, if anyone wants to save their life, yeah, they'll lose it.

If you don't follow me on judgment day, you'll forfeit everything you wanted to keep. But for the Samaritans who had wanted to keep themselves as their priority, Jesus is saying, I'm not going to send fire on them now.

Why? Because I'm going to take the fire of God's judgment on myself. Because that's where I'm headed to the cross. You see, Jesus is so much more tender and gentle than often we can be with other people.

And in a world where, you know, we're so suspicious of leaders with too much power because they're all about self-interest grabbing for themselves and then they create cultures where everyone in the workplace is trying to throw other people under the bus so that they can get themselves promoted.

Jesus says, I'm a leader who's willing to lay down my life for even the most hard-hearted, mistake-ridden, sin-infested person. Like the Samaritans, he's willing to be shot down for your hard-heartedness on the cross because he's so committed to your good.

[31 : 52] He's so committed. And if you have someone who you know loves you that much, a boss who would be willing to take the hit for you, isn't that somebody you're willing to undying loyalty to?

Because you know, in Acts, after Jesus is raised from the dead, he sends, the gospel is to go out. Do you remember from the Acts series where the gospel goes? It goes from Jerusalem to, what does it go next?

Judea to Samaria. Isn't that interesting? You see, the same people who had rejected Jesus, he sends out his word again to call them back to himself because that's the kind of God he is who keeps calling again and again because he longs to show you grace.

The gospel call goes out to us. He is gracious beyond compare. He calls us to obedience. Just as my name is Chris Thornton and you can't say, hey, I'd like to have Chris but I don't think I want Thornton.

So you can't say, I want Jesus as my savior but I don't want to have him as my lord. But when you get Jesus as your lord, you get a gracious lord. Who is the kind of lord you want to have as a leader?

[33 : 33] And some of us here, Jesus is calling you today and you've been wavering, you've been staying in the boat of your own comfort, wondering whether you're going to commit or not to Jesus.

There are things that are attractive to you, around you, careers, relationships, money, all those things and that's where your focus has been. And Jesus is saying to you, will you see how much I'm worth following?

Come and follow me today. Some of us have been Christians for a long time and it's almost like we've kind of, we've followed him, we heard his call but then we walked kind of, we'd like to get back into the boat a little bit because we want to just be safe.

Life is busy, things are challenging and Jesus says, I'm humble, I'm gentle but I've died for you so trust me now and start following me again as your Lord and your Savior.

It's grace that he calls us but he bids us count the cost. The fuel to be obedient is to know the grace that he has given to us as a gracious Savior and the final thing is the mission.

[34 : 51] the mission. You cannot be a disciple of Jesus without being on his mission to make disciples of others.

He says to his disciples, follow me and I will make you fishers, I will make you become fishers of men. You've got to understand that's a phrase which is taken from the book of Jeremiah chapter 16 where God calls fishers to catch people and it's a sign of judgment.

It's catching those who are running away from God and ready bringing them for judgment but Jesus says hey I'm not coming to catch people for judgment, I'm coming to save people. And Jesus says if you want to follow me I want to make you somebody who reaches out to others.

When you saturate yourself in who I am get to know me, love me, see how beautiful I am. What's going to happen is I'm going to stretch you. I'm going to call you to do things which you think you could never possibly do.

If you think your life is manageable Jesus says I want to make it so only I can do the things in you. He wants to give you a call so big that it feels overwhelming but what he does is he's going to say graciously I'm going to take you step by step, day by day, to be this person who influences and impacts other people in your life.

[36 : 22] And when we mess up we're going to learn to trust Jesus as our savior again and that's going to fuel us to obey him. But if I gave a five year old the Van Halen music and said I want you to go and play it it's impossible.

I couldn't play it. And when you hear Jesus play and you see what he's like you look at it and you just say wow I can't do that. But you know how do you learn to play a piece of music?

You take it one phrase by phrase by phrase and what you do is you learn the one phrase and then you learn another one and then you keep practicing that first phrase keep practicing do the next one and then sometimes you go back because you've forgotten the first one and you just kind of do that step by step by step by step by step by step and eventually you learn how to play the piece of music which you thought was impossible to play.

That's the journey of discipleship that God has you and me on. He's got this big call and some of us say I don't know how to do it and he's going to say I'm going to take you step by step. And when we do kind of dud notes on there he says just come back in repentance come back and trust me but he says my call to you is I want to make you a disciple maker.

And I want to just kind of leave us with a couple of things. I want to leave us with a couple of steps to think about because I don't like giving just steps to do because the danger with steps is people think that loving Jesus is just about following a series of steps.

[38 : 02] No it's actually about coming into relationship with Jesus and learning him. But here's a couple of things which I think can be helpful to help us to think what does it mean for me to be somebody as a disciple learning Jesus to now become someone who can make disciples of others.

So here's a little diagram and I don't have time to go through all of this. So I'm just going to kind of give you a teaser and then we'll come and look at it again. The first stage if you want to make a disciple is you've got to engage with somebody.

that means and here's tricky it means saying hi to somebody. Okay did you get that? Saying hi it means going up to somebody on a Sunday going up to somebody in your office going up to somebody on the bus wherever you are just praying say God who do you want me to say hi to and then going up to somebody and just engaging with them.

For some of us that is actually scary. because we only stick with the people we're comfortable with. I'm an introvert or whatever it is.

But sometimes if God as you know always God tells you follow me maybe you need to die to your comfort and move out of your comfort zone and say hi to somebody.

[39 : 23] It's not complicated. But maybe some of us we're fine at doing that. No problem. We've got relationships with people with Christians and non Christians. We're in that. Then we've actually got to understand how do we invite people into that next stage in the relationship.

Because some of them we've never invited people. I remember once having dinner in the UK and a Jehovah's Witness came to our door. And I had a friend over for dinner and I was like hey he actually got up to go to the door.

I said hey tell him we're not interested. We're going to come back. I said he's not even to come back. Okay. And he then went to the door opened it up and said hey come in. And he said come down have some dinner with us.

And we started sharing and just saying hey we're Christians and this and I was like yeah we're Christians. And he was kind of sharing a little bit and just getting them to share a little bit about their lives.

And after a while he said hey yeah come back again. Here's my house. And he and he and after that he said to me you know do you know why I did that?

[40 : 34] He said you know as Christians we often just try and blank out people in our lives. The kind of guys we don't want to we don't want to see in our lives. And we don't see that actually the most effective way to reach people is to love them.

And sometimes you have to just invite people in to your world. To go for coffee. To come for a meal. To go hiking. To do something. To come to church.

To go to your CG. You invite them in. So they can see your life. And in that context you can then ask about them.

You can ask about what they think about faith. You can share what you think about faith. But in a context where you're not just giving them kind of here's your four spiritual laws and then running away.

But they're seeing like a disciple sees Jesus. They're seeing a life lived out. And you're asking them questions. Getting curious about people.

[41 : 35] If some of you struggle with inviting people maybe God is going to say to you. Come and die. Get out of your comfort zone. Who's that person in your office?

Who's that person in the church? Who's that person that you need to reach out to? That you know is there. But you've never taken the next step. There's plenty more I could say.

But I won't go on for the rest. First, Jesus calls us to costly discipleship. It's a call of grace to become like him.

It's a costly grace. But it's one that he fuels with his power so that as we go out we can go and make disciples of others and he gets the glory.

Let's pray. Let's pray. I want you to stop and think. Where is God calling me to come and die?

[42 : 40] Maybe you're at a point you realize that the whole of your life is actually just wrapped up with a whole lot of things which are about you. Jesus is calling you right now.

Will you hear his call? Some of you, you do the right things, you follow the right things but you've never even thought about being the people around you.

Jesus says, okay, who's that one person that this week you need to take a step? You need to say hi to them. You need to invite them to something.

You need to pray and say, God, help me to engage with them. Take a step out of the boat. Maybe you need to ask them, what do you actually think about Christianity?

You've been in a relationship for so long with them but you've never asked. Maybe that's your step. Maybe you've never shared what you do on a Sunday. Maybe that's your step.

[43 : 45] Every disciple is, God's going to call in different ways but he's calling you now. Just respond to him. And again, maybe just open up your hands as a sign of surrender to him.

Jesus, fill us. Show us yourself. Let us want to be like you. More than that, let us want you.

Make us those who see the whole, the beautiful calling to be your disciple. To see how precious you are and to follow you today.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.